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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000250

SIPDIS

STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, AF/EX, DS/IP/OPO, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/ITA
LONDON PASS TO AMBASSADOR CAMPBELL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/29/2016

TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [KHLs](#) [PINR](#) [ETRD](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: HOSTAGE-TAKING, SITREP #2

REF: A. LAGOS 48

- [B](#). LAGOS 249
- [C](#). LAGOS 248
- [D](#). LAGOS 233

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reasons 1.4 (D & E)

Hostage Welfare Update

[1](#)1. (SBU) Willbros will contact the next-of-kin for all of their employees, and have already made contact with the family of AmCit Macon Hawkins. Shell reports Hawkins has hypertension, as does Russell Spell.

[1](#)2. (U) Aside from the three Americans reported reftel B, the other captives have been identified: British John Hudspith; Egyptian Aly Senary Shadly; Filipino Anthony Santos, scaffolder; Thai Arak Suwana, welder; Thai Somsak Mhadmo, pipe welder; Egyptian Bardese Faysal Mohammed, pipe welder.

MEND Claims Responsibility

[1](#)3. (SBU) In a statement released through the media, MEND this afternoon claimed responsibility for this morning's attacks in Delta State. They publicized the names and nationalities of all nine prisoners. They also claimed they had destroyed the Forcados crude loading platform, Ekeremor-Yeye platform, and the NNPC Escravos-Lagos pipeline. (Note: While sustaining a yet to be determined amount of damage, it does not appear that these facilities were destroyed.) The statement calls this morning's attacks "impromptu" and threatens further attacks.

Shell Western Area Operations Suffer a Severe Hit

[1](#)4. (C) As previously reported, Shell has shut down Forcados Terminal, which they tell us processes 400,000 bpd. Shell attempted to send a crew to assess damage at the facility but they retreated when approached by a group of unidentified small boats. In the absence of a technical assessment of damage to this facility, any estimate of the time period exports are likely to be affected is speculation. Shell also reported an attack on a pipeline at Chanomi Creek, which handles oil collection for on-shore facilities in its western operations. Additionally, Shell has informed us they will shut down production on the floating, production, storage and offloading vessel (FPSO) "SeaEagle" by tomorrow (reftel A). "SeaEagle" has a production capacity of 216,000 bpd. We will stay in close contact with Shell in order to pass to the Department Shell's damage assessment, once it is done.

NNPC Pipeline Attack Brings Down
Additional Domestic Refining

[1](#)5. (C) Per reftel A, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Escravos-Lagos pipeline was also attacked. This pipeline had also been attacked two weeks ago, halting refining activities at NNPC's Warri refinery. A security contact informed us the pipeline was severed today at a location that also forces closure of NNPC's Kaduna refinery. These refineries do not produce for the international market. They are important to the domestic market. NNPC maintains a 25-30 day supply of refined products in country. If these lines cannot be repaired soon, an impact on the domestic availability of refined products (petrol, kerosene, and diesel) is likely within about two weeks.

Military Has No Plans for Retaliation

16. (C) A senior military intelligence officer said the GON had no plans for military action at this juncture. He also said the fire that damaged Shell's Cawthorne Channel facility (reftel C) resulted from an attack by militants.

Deaths Reported in Barge Attack

17. (C) Sources gave us further details about the barge attack that resulted in the hostage-taking. The Burutu Local Government Area (LGA) Chair told us two soldiers died and several soldiers and civilians were wounded in the attack. A Control Risk Group (CRG) consultant employed by Willbros said the attack on the WB-318 barge began at 7:10 a.m. when 6-8 speed boats surrounded the barge and militants then boarded. A firefight lasting 25 minutes occurred prior to the boarding. He said barge security was a mixture of army and navy personnel. After the hostages were seized, the speed boats went out to sea and did not make for land immediately.

Post Actions

18. (SBU) Post is in contact with GON officials who have access to the probable kidnappers in hopes of obtaining information about the physical condition of the nine hostages.
BROWNE